

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 085494

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MORGM, MPIC, CU, UR, POL

SUBJECT: REPORTS OF SOVIET PILOTS IN CUBA

1. PRESS STORIES ABOUT INCREASED ACTIVITY BY SOVIET PILOTS IN CUBA HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING FOR SEVERAL DAYS IN US. THESE STORIES STEMMED FROM AVIATION WEEK ARTICLE WHICH ACCORDING TO UPI REPORTED THAT "U.S. OFFICIALS ARE CONCERNED OVER A RECENT INFLUX OF SOVIET COMBAT PILOTS INTO CUBA." THE REASON FOR THE MOSCOW MOVE, THE WEEKLY SAID, "MAY BE AN ATTEMPT TO WARN THE UNITED STATES AGAINST ANY MOVES AGAINST CUBA IN THE BELIEF THAT THIS COUNTRY WOULD AVOID A DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOVIET MILITARY."

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2. ON APRIL 6 PENTAGON SPOKESMAN CONFIRMED THAT "WE ARE AWARE OF SOME SOVIET PILOTS IN CUBA AND WE ARE EVALUATING

THE REPORTS TO SEE WHAT THEY MEAN." FOLLOWING IS GUIDANCE FOR USE WITH HOST AND THIRD COUNTRY OFFICIALS ON IF ASKED BASIS:

3. THE PRESENCE OF SOVIET FIGHTER PILOTS IN CUBA IS NOT NEW, BUT APPARENTLY THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN THEIR NUMBERS OF LATE. THE TOTAL NUMBER REMAINS SMALL. WE ARE

WATCHING THIS SITUATION CLOSELY, BUT AT THE MOMENT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE WHICH WOULD INDICATE THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT IS RELATED TO THE WARNINGS WE HAVE MADE ABOUT CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD. KISSINGER

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